DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 342 704 SO 021 906

AUTHOR Boyte, Harry C.; Hogg, Kathryn Stoff
TITLE Doing Politics: An Owner's Manual for Public Life.
INSTITUTION Minnesota Univ., Minneapolis. Hubert H. Humphrey Inst. of Public Affairs.
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 57p.
AVAILABLE FROM Project Public Life, Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, 301 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455 ($8.00).
PUB TYPE Guides - General (050)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Citizen Participation; *Citizenship Education; Citizenship Responsibility; Community Responsibility; Democratic Values; Leadership Responsibility; *Political Issues; *Politics; *Public Affairs Education; Social Problems

ABSTRACT

This study guide is designed to be used by any group of people interested in examining and strengthening the ways in which politics works tody. An argument is made that politics suffers because U.S. society largely has lost a strong sense of public life--a challenging, diverse, and dynamic arena beyond one's immediate family and friendship circles. Persons who use this guide are encouraged to think about and debate this view of public life, and then to discuss how politics is done today by evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of several common "modes" or definitions of politics: institutional, protests, service, and community-based problem solving. A final portion of the guide looks at "citizen politics" where people learn how to put public life back into politics. The central idea of citizen politics is that in public life people can learn the skills and develop the power to take leadership in solving society's problems on local, state, and national levels. Each of the six study sessions in the manual are followed by questions for discussion. The sessions are: (1) Traditions and Changes; (2) Institutional Politics: Representative Government; (3) Protest Politics: Citizens on the March; (4) Service Politics: Helping One Another; (5) Community Politics: Neighborhood Self-Help; and (6) Citizen Politics: People Taking Charge. Two appendices are included: the first contains suggestions on how to use this guide and the second lists 37 readings relevant to the themes of the guide. (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

HARRY C. BOYTE

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SO 021 906

dOing pOlitics

an owner's manual for public life

written by Harry C. Boyte and Kathryn Stoff Hogg
illustrated by Daniel Jette
edited by Rebecca Breuer

dOing pOlitics Copyright © 1991, Project Public Life. All rights reserved.

Illustrations Copyright © 1991, Daniel Jette. All rights reserved.

For more information, contact Project Public Life
Humphrey Institute
301-19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
612/625-0142

Table of Contents

Introduction.....1

Session 1
Traditions and Changes.....5
Questions for Discussion.....16

Session 2
Institutional Politics: Representative Government.....17
Questions for Discussion.....26

Session 3
Protest Politics: Citizens on the March.....27
Qustions for Discussion.....32

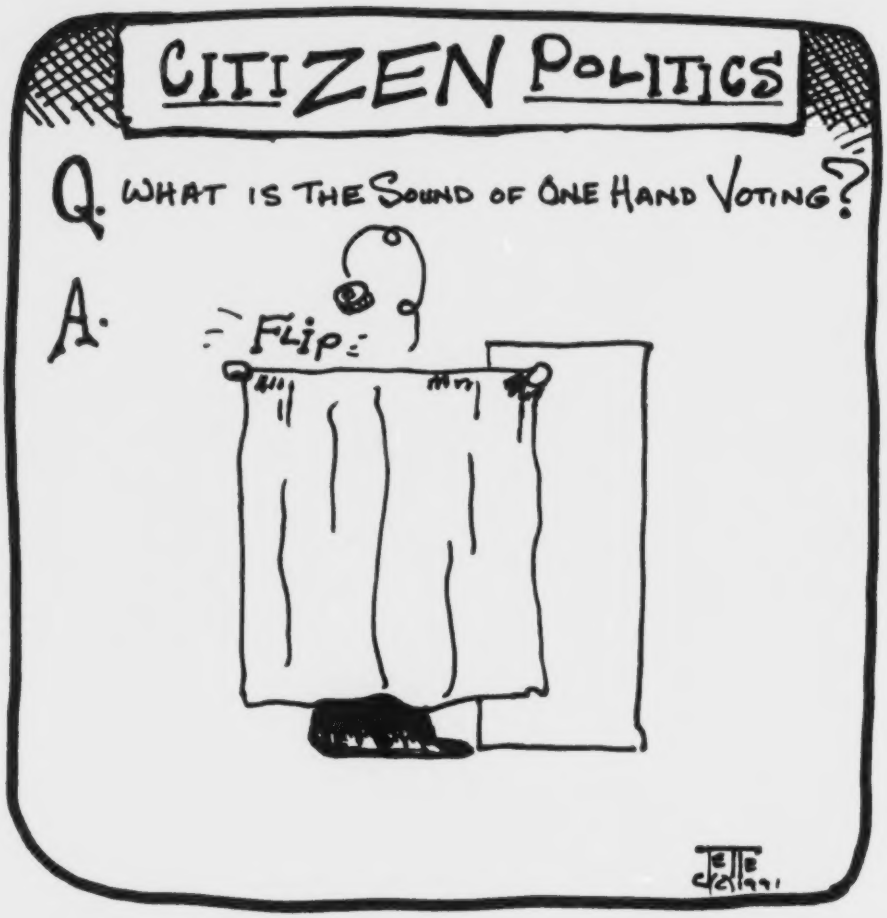
Session 4
Service Politics: Helping One Another.....33
Questions for Discussion.....40

Session 5
Community Politics: Neighborhood Self-Help.....41
Questions for Discussion.....48

Session 6
Citizen Politics: People Taking Charge.....49
Questions for Discussion.....56

Appendices
A: How to use this book.....59
B: Resources–readings, organizations and networks.....60

Introduction



Welcome to the 1990s! From burgeoning debt to the pollution of our air, water, and land; from cynicism and anger at the government and elected officials to a growing underclass, the United States shows signs that something is not working at home. Large numbers of people ask why can't we apply the same energy and demonstrate the same capacity for action to our great domestic challenges that we demonstrated in the Gulf War?

How did these problems develop in a country that is now used as a model for democracy around the world? What does being a democracy mean, anyway? And what is our role, the citizens' role, in dealing with these issues?

This study circle, *dOing pOlitics*, begins with Project Public Life's view of the problem. It makes an argument that politics suffers because we have largely lost a strong sense of **public life** itself — a challenging, diverse and dynamic arena beyond our immediate family and friendship circles. In public life, people learn how one can deal with and even act effectively with others that you may not personally "like" or agree with on many issues. You learn how to get visibility for contributions. And you learn how to participate in and shape the world around you.

Participants are encouraged to think about and debate this view of public life, and the idea that politics today is greatly impoverished because we have lost a strong sense of the public world. Then participants will also discuss how we do politics today by evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of several common "modes" or definitions of politics: institutional, protest, service and community-based problem-solving.

The final session looks at "citizen politics" where people learn how to put public life back into politics. The central idea of citizen politics is that in public life people can learn the skills and develop the power to take leadership in solving society's problems on local, state and national levels. It is increasingly clear that critical decisions affecting everyone cannot be left to the few for the most practical of reasons: we need many perspectives and many people's energy to solve the problems we face, from drugs and crime to pollution, homelessness and the crisis in education.

To do this requires reinvigorating the concept of public life and learning the arts of effective public action. *dOing pOlitics* helps set the stage. It evaluates politics today. It makes some suggestions about what can be done. And it invites and challenges you, the participants, to be part of creating the solutions.

"The mutual confidence on which all else depends can be maintained only by an open mind and a brave reliance upon free discussion."

–Judge Learned Hand, 1952

Session 1

Traditions & Challenges

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Who should govern the people? And what should governance **involve**? The nation's founders disagreed about this question, and it continues to be a major issue of debate and discussion today. What kind of politics do we need to address the critical issues that we face as a nation in the 1990s and beyond?

Alexander Hamilton, the nation's first Secretary of the Treasury and one of the authors of the *Federalist Papers*, the writings that did much to win passage of the Constitution, took a pessimistic view of the political capacities of ordinary people. "Every man ought to be suppposed a knave, and to have no other end in all his actions but private interests...insatiable avarice and ambition," he argued.

Hamilton thought that "the rich and well-born" should govern through representative government, "where the right of election is well-secured and regulated, and the exercise of the legislative, executive and judicial authorities is vested in select persons."

Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence and the nation's third president, on the other hand, believed that participatory government was essential for maintaining the liberty fought for in the American Revolution. In fact, he defined *freedom* as the ability to participate in public life. When he wrote about *happiness* in the Declaration of Independence (the *inalienable rights* that he listed included "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"), he was convinced that true happiness had to involve such participation. For Jefferson, in fact, people's ability to participate in the public world was the only real protection for liberty. "Where everyman is participator in the government of affairs," he argued, "not merely at an election one day in the year but every day...he will let the heart be torn out of his body sooner than his power be wrested from him by a Caesar or a Bonaparte."

"Commonwealth" in American history meant government that **the people** owned. Four states in the United States (Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Kentucky) are officially "Commonwealths." Through much of American history, however, **every** state was informally referred to as a commonwealth. The term conveyed something distinctive about the American political system: here, government was understood to come from the people themselves, rather than from down on high. Thomas Paine, the great publicist of the American Revolution, captured this sense in his observation that "a constitution is not the act of a government, but a people constituting a government." This view is inscribed in the Constitution's Preamble: 'We the People' created the framework for government.

"A constitution is not the act of a government, but a people constituting a government."

–Thomas Paine

"There can be no perfect democracy curtailed by color, race or poverty. But with all we can accomplish all, even peace."

– W.E.B. DuBois

In part, this meant that government leaders drew their authority from popular election. As one observer described it, "All authority of every kind is derived by representation from the people and the democratic principle is carried into every part of the government."

It also meant a particular relationship between the citizenry and the government. People acknowledged that government has certain common tasks, like as the overall regulation of society–"promoting the general welfare"–and provision for the nation's common defense and security interests.

The public, however, also continued to view centralized government with suspicion. As early as the 1790s, political clubs called Democratic-Republican societies inspired by the French Revolution formed around the idea that the government could only be kept in check "by the display of power equal to itself, the collected sentiment of the people." Jefferson even urged a revolution every several decades, as antidote to concentrated authority.

Citizens also undertook many activities that in other nations were performed by government. The work of immigrants who created communities by clearing forests, forming militia, raising barns, and establishing religious congregations generated a distinctive view that government **rests on** an active citizenry who take it upon themselves to care for common projects, beyond the designated functions of government. As two historians put it, "for the farmers and seamen, for the fishermen, artisans and new merchants, commonwealth repeated the lessons they knew from the organization of churches and towns...the wisdom of common action."

Traditions of Public

The concept of strong citizen involvement has always been closely associated with the idea of public, both as a place ("the public world") and as the practice of people acting together. Public comes from the Latin word, *populus*, meaning people. It is also connected to the Latin, *pubes*, meaning maturity (puberty), because the time of reaching maturity as a teenager was the moment when one entered the world beyond one's household.

Both meanings–public as a site, or particular kind of space, and public as a form of politics, or activity, are important in the history of "public."

Public meant a larger and more diverse world beyond one's particular community or group. "Public" is open and accessible to others' view. Going out in public brought to mind mingling with people one didn't know, who might very well be different. This

sense of public involves meeting strangers who sometimes turn out to be the source of insight or even revelation. In the Bible, angels appear to Abraham as strangers; Jesus comes to his disciples as a stranger after the crucifixion.

Involvement in thepublic world was seen as crucial for life. The Greek word, *idios*, from which idiot comes, meant someone who only had a private life, blocked from public.

All of this comes down to us today as the concept of public space–particular **sorts** of public environments, beyond family or community or group–in which we encounter others of diverse backgrounds and engage in public action. Attention to public spaces and their qualities suggests many of the obstacles that have to be overcome to reengage citizens in strong public action. Public spaces have lost their rooted community quality–village greens and local meeting places have given way to far more impersonal, fragmented settings, where people easily feel drawfed, fearful, overwhelmed or balkanized. But it also makes clear that a strictly community-grounded language is insufficient today for public life: people need to be able to see the connection between local settings (either geographic or institutional) and larger frameworks of policy-making, communication and influence.

The concept of public space highlights the fact that a series of political skills, not well taught at all today, are nonetheless still indespensible for action in the world as it is. Public spaces, even with their limitations and obstacles, are also challenging, bracing, and potentially immensely rewarding places, where people can **learn** to act more or less well and effectively. In public space, principles of effective action involve political "arts" like developing political relationships, listening and speaking well, understanding power dynamics, negotiating, practicing judgment, holding participants accountable. These overlap with but also are distinguishable from the capacities developed in both private life and community. Notice of the quality and dynamics of public space draws attention to ways to improve public space in the future.

"Democracy means people have the right to make decisions."

–Jane Addams

In American history, the idea of public as an actor referred to the citizenry acting as a whole, not simply government. This voluntary tradition produced three distinct ways of seeing civil society and the role of "the public" in relationship to politics and the public world: the public was a deliberative body; the public was a problem-solver; and the public was a group of insurgent reformers.

1 **A deliberative body**: In 1776 in a letter to his wife, Abigail, John Adams expressed confidence that the citizens of the nation would be able to act wisely on the great challenges before them.

"Time has been given for the whole People, maturely to consider the great Question of Independence and to ripen their Judgments, dissipate their Fears, and allure their Hopes, by discussing it in News Papers and Pamphletts, by debating it, in Assembilies, Conventions, Committees of Safety and Inspection, in Town and County Meetings, as well as in private Conversations."

Adams' view captured one basic meaning of public–the concept of the body of people **created** and sustained through a process of discussion, debate and dialogue about current affairs. Such a sense of public took shape through the press, libraries, clubs, coffee houses, electoral debates and other groups that created awareness of a thinking world beyond family and friends.

American educational and media institutions have their roots in this understanding of public as deliberator about political issues of the day. Thus, newspapers once described their mission as "creating informed public debate about current issues," instead of conveying expert and government news to the citizens, as the point tends to be today. In the 19th century, the expansion of public education came about largely through the efforts of voluntary citizen organizations, and was seen as essential to a deliberative citizenry: schools were where people learned the practical skills of discussion, like public oratory and rhetoric action. More recently, schools have focused on training for careers, rather than teaching skills of public life.

The view of the citizenry as a deliberative body produced large civic education movements. University extension programs, adopted from England in the 1880s, were designed to promote better rural citizenship, as well as improved farming. In poor and immigrant communities, groups like the Workmen's Circle and Settlement Houses educated citizens about public issues.

Doonesbury / By Garry Trudeau

MR. SECRETARY, I WONDER IF YOU'D CARE TO EXPLAIN YOUR OBVIOUS DISPLEASURE OVER THE WHOLE NOTION OF A PUBLIC DEBATE.
CONGRESSWOMAN, IT JUST SENDS THE WRONG MESSAGE! WHEN SADDAM HUSSEIN TURNS ON CNN AND SEES DIVISIVE DIALOGUE LIKE THIS, HE TAKES HEART!
IN FACT, IN HIS RECENT MESSAGE TO HIS NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, HE SPECIFICALLY CITED U.S. CONGRESSIONAL DISSENT AS A KEY REASON WHY HE WAS RELEASING ALL THE HOSTAGES!
DREADFUL SETBACK, THAT.
WELL, DON'T BLAME US!

DOONESBURY © 1991 G. B. Trudeau. Reprinted with permission of Universal Press Syndicate. All rights reserved.

These traditions continue down to the present day. Organizations like the League of Women Voters create forums and discussions. In juries, people rise to the office of citizenship, showing judgment, deliberating, and debating as they consider questions of guilt and innocence, life and death. During the 1991 Congressional debate about the war in the Gulf, politicians of every persuasion voiced their opinions with eloquence and without attacking each other's motives. The tragedy is that this seemed so unique!

2 **An agent of problem-solving**: The public was, second, a direct actor in problem-solving. This understanding of public was reflected in direct democracy, like the New England town meeting, which combined deliberation with action on public affairs. More informally, it appeared in our rich traditions of voluntary efforts that Alexis de Tocqueville observed when he travelled through the nation in the 1830s. "Americans of all ages, all stations in life, and all types of disposition are forever forming associations," said de-Tocqueville. "At the head of any new undertaking, where in France you would find the government or in England some territorial magnate, in the United States you are sure to find an association."

Immigrants from every corner of the world brought with them strong practices of community action. On the West Side of St. Paul, Minnesota, in the area called the Flats down along the Mississippi River, Jewish refugees fleeing from prosecution in Europe mingled in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with French Canadians, Mexicans, African-Americans, Irish and Germans. It was a poor, tough community with no running water and unpaved streets. But people's memories of growing up in the Flats are rich with stories of public life and public creation. Street corner debates. Abramowitz's hardware store, where people heard the latest news from Europe. Neighborhood House, the settlement where groups organized community projects and different ethnic organizations celebrated their traditions and cultures. People didn't lock their doors. Women were safe at any time of night. The residents of the Flats created their community: they built synagogues and Catholic churches, they put together their homes, they made parks, they constructed a library and the settlement house. In the process they created a stake in America.

S uch traditions flourished in a range of voluntary groups across America–religious congregations that combined worship with community effort, barn raisings, quilting bees, immigrant mutual aid groups and voluntary fire departments. They also generated organizations like the National Council of Negro Women, 4-H, the Red Cross, the YMCA, the YWCA, and Rotary. Americans looked to their own initiative, rather than large governmental or business organizations, to undertake voluntary projects concerned

" One basic meaning of public–the concept of the body of people created and sustained through a process of discussion, debate and dialogue about current affairs. "

with addressing public problems. Most functions later assumed by government were first developed as community initiatives.

Practices of citizen problem-solving have especially revived in recent years in community and neighborhood organizations. Community groups take on a wide range of issues, from crime and drugs to commercial development, housing construction, community-based services, landtrusts, and historic preservation.

3 **An insurgent public**: Since the early 19th century, politics has included much more than elections. Much of its most vital side took root in voluntary groups like missionary societies, educational groups, abolition crusades, and moral reform and temperance organizations. Such groups were the seedbeds for large social movements which advocated expanding the "citizenry" itself by including within it groups that were left out in original definitions. Thus, abolition, women's suffrage, The Farmers Alliances and Knights of Labor during the 19th century and the civil rights movement of the 1960s all sought to make political society more open and inclusive.

The key to their impact was that they combined struggles for power and reform with the assumption of **responsibility** for public affairs. The Women's Christian Temperance Union of the late 19th Century, for instance, wedded decades of reform agitation against alcohol use with practical problem-solving. As one historian described, by 1889, WCTU activities in Chicago included "two day nurseries, two Sunday schools, an industrial school, a mission that sheltered four thousand homeless or destitute women in a twelve month period, a lodging house that...provided temporary housing for over fifty thousand men, and a low cost restaurant."

"Citizenship Schools in the civil rights movement trained thousands of local leaders in a different view of first class citizenship."

In the 1960s, the Citizenship Schools and Freedom Schools in the civil rights movement helped disenfranchised blacks register to vote. Such schools also trained thousands of local leaders in a different view of "first class citizenship," in which they would take responsibility for problem-solving in their own communities. Through this experience, people also developed a sense of themselves as makers of the world. "We found ourselves involved in working in political work," said Unita Blackwell, with the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. "We still ain't figured all of it out yet, but it's been just wonderful."

Many of the best examples of this public-spirited reform tradition today are found in public interest groups. Public interest organizations seek to make the large institutions of business and government more accountable, but they do more than voice criticisms. They also propose solutions which they believe are workable and realistic for problems facing the nation.

The Erosion of Public Life

Some traditions of public life continue in the 1990s. Yet Americans sense of "public" has also greatly weakened. "Commonwealth" is an almost forgotten term–indicating how far we are from a sense that the people **own** the government. Television "soundbites" replace serious debate of issues; highly moralized protest movements and single issue groups crowd out public-spirited reformers. A number of trends, from mobility to consumer culture, have eroded public life. Especially the increase in institutional scale and the rise of expert authority have severed links between community life and public.

The Problem of Scale

Throughout the nineteenth century, small towns and the rural landscape provided the setting for most people's lives from birth to death. In this environment, the explosive growth in voluntary organizations contributed to a broadening definition of citizenship and public affairs. Democracy suggested New England town meetings, or informally, decision-making in business, work-related and voluntary groups.

But the developments of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries radically changed people's experience. Today in large cities, many scarcely know their neighbors, much less those on the other side of the tracks. Waves of newcomers have brought new customs, traditions, and even different languages. Mass communications technologies weakened the ties between the press and the citizenry, with the media often mainly presenting the views of experts and distant decision-makers rather than helping to spark public discussion and debate.

As William Schambra, Director of the Office of Planning, Policy and Legislation for the Department of Health and Human Services, has observed, the focus of civic involvement shifted from voluntary association and community activity to government itself. In the view of many reformers, citizens needed big government to counter the influence of massive corporate and other institutions. People could continue to have impact through various public agencies and electoral reforms–advisory boards, referenda and initiative and the like.

Yet the reality has mainly proved different. Most Americans continue to identify with their locales, traditions and cultures. But their worlds seem shaped by distant forces over which they have little control. Corner grocers have given way to chain stores. Local decisions over education have been removed from neighborhood

"Most Americans continue to identify with their locales, traditions and cultures. But their worlds seem shaped by distant forces over which they have little control."

schools to citywide, state or national bureaucracies. Local businesses have been bought out by national or global corporations. The weakening of citizens' power and authority in the midst of large-scale institutions has been quickened further by the growing authority of experts.

The Rise of Expert Decision-Making

As large government and corporate structures came to dominate, a new generation of managers and technical specialists drew their basic metaphors and language from science. A "culture of professionalism" detached knowledge from local communities. Experts emphasized rationality, methodical processes and standards of objectivity, in place of public deliberation. "Old functions of child welfare and training have passed over into the hands of sociologists, psychiatrists, physicians, home economists and other scientists dealing with problems of human welfare," wrote two child guidance experts in 1934.

> ***"There are few opportunities for citizens to learn the skills of action, deliberation and evaluation through which ordinary people move to the center of problem-solving, and experts are "on tap, not on top."***

Today, experts tend to **define** and **diagnose** the problem, **generate the language and labels** for talking about it, **propose the therapeutic or remedial techniques** for problem-solving, and **evaluate** whether the problem has been solved. In a world dominated by experts, most people are looked at in terms of what they **lack**, not what they have to **contribute**; "citizens" become "clients." There are few opportunities for citizens to learn the skills of action, deliberation and evaluation through which ordinary people move to the center of problem-solving, and experts are "on tap, not on top."

Thus, voluntary institutions have lost many of their public dimensions. Their goals have shifted from public deliberation and problem-solving to service provision for clients. The local union moved from the center of community life to a marketing operation around a series of specific benefits. Teenage programs deemphasized citizenship and developed programs run by professionals to teach self-esteem and career skills.

As strong experiences of public deliberation and public action have eroded, a sense of active citizenship also weakened. The challenge of renewing American politics thus involves bringing back public life to the different settings in which we spend our time beyond family and friends, from school to workplace to voluntary association and government structures.

The Challenge

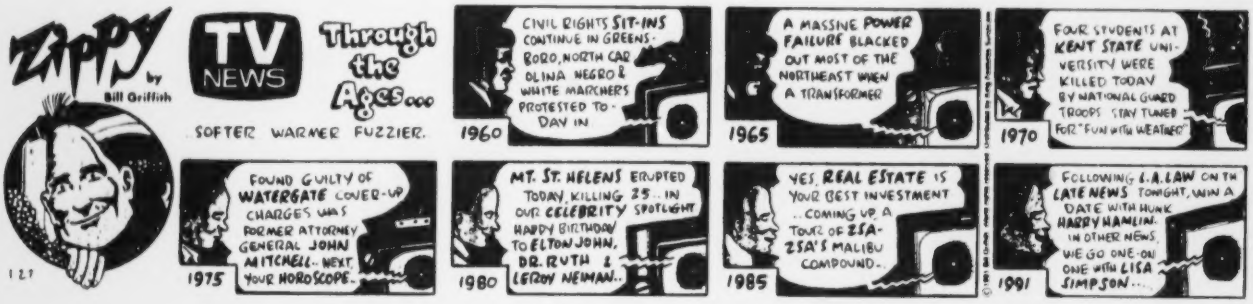
Politics has changed dramatically over the past thirty years. The 1960s brought ordinary people into politics in sweeping movements like civil rights, anti-poverty groups, the anti-war effort, environ-

mental and consumer protests. But usually sixties movements emphasized **protest** and **consciousness-raising**, where advocates dramatized injustices. The 1970s and 1980s took a more private and personal turn but were more complicated than the era of the "Me Decade" or encounter groups and "human potential," as they are often portrayed.

People became involved in a great range of community and voluntary efforts, from neighborhood gardens and clean-ups to food banks, literacy programs to battered women's shelters. Yet involvement outside people's own immediate lives tended to mean one on one service projects, aimed at helping those less fortunate. Service effort leaves larger issues of public problems usually unaddressed.

Both protest and service have their uses. But in the 1990s, we need a different politics.

> ***"In the 1990s, we need a different politics."***


ZIPPY by Bill Griffith
TV NEWS
Through the Ages...
SOFTER WARMER FUZZIER.
CIVIL RIGHTS SIT-INS CONTINUE IN GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA NEGRO & WHITE MARCHERS PROTESTED TODAY IN
1960
A MASSIVE POWER FAILURE BLACKED OUT MOST OF THE NORTHEAST WHEN A TRANSFORMER
1965
FOUR STUDENTS AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY WERE KILLED TODAY BY NATIONAL GUARD TROOPS STAY TUNED FOR "FUN WITH WEATHER"
1970
FOUND GUILTY OF WATERGATE COVER-UP CHARGES WAS FORMER ATTORNEY GENERAL JOHN MITCHELL.. NEXT YOUR HOROSCOPE..
1975
MT. ST. HELENS ERUPTED TODAY, KILLING 25.. IN OUR CELEBRITY SPOTLIGHT HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ELTON JOHN, DR. RUTH & LEROY NEIMAN..
1980
YES, REAL ESTATE IS YOUR BEST INVESTMENT ..COMING UP, A TOUR OF ZSA-ZSA'S MALIBU COMPOUND..
1985
FOLLOWING L.A. LAW ON TH LATE NEWS TONIGHT, WIN A DATE WITH HUNK HARRY HAMLIN. IN OTHER NEWS, WE GO ONE-ON-ONE WITH LISA SIMPSON....
1991

Reprinted with Permission from King Features Syndicate.

Large numbers of people know that politics in its common forms is simply not working very well. Steven Conn summarized his generation's insights about the problems we face in an Open Letter response to William Buckley's call for national service: "Many of us in the twenty-something crowd feel we are being bequeathed a colossal mess." At the same time, there is great untapped energy and creativity among the citizenry to address critical issues.

We will never be able to go back to the "good old days"–which in any event had their own major problems. We live in a diverse, technological, interconnected world. We do have older traditions of public life to draw upon, however, as we invent a politics adequate to our future: a politics which is open, productive and relevant to people's lives. That's the challenge ahead. There are no blueprints, no final answers. But we can begin: to forge new traditions, to build new public spaces, to repair and to create the world around us.

Session 1: Questions for Discussion

1. Describe a public space out of your experience. In what arenas do you create or are you part of a public space?

2. What does citizenship mean to you? How does your conception of democracy define what it means to be a citizen?

3. As a group, try to reach a working definition of democracy.

4. What else might you add to why politics has changed since Hamilton's time? Does this analysis fit your experience?

5. What does politics mean to you? Where does it happen? Who does it?

6. Below is a chart of some differences between private life, community life and public life, drawn from Project Public Life's work. In our view, nothing is every "either/or": there is always a mix of public and private in any setting. But there is more or less of private and public. Part of the art of acting in the public world is to figure out where you are, what is most effective to accomplish your goals, and what is most appropriate.

PRIVATE	COMMUNITY	PUBLIC
family/friends/self	congregation/workplace/club	large settings
sameness/commonality	familiarity	diversity
fidelity	loyalty	accountability
givenness	dependability	choice
intimacy/closed	partly open	open, fluid
vulnerability	guarded	dramatic role
love	appreciation	respect/recognition
self-giving	reciprocity	self-interest

Do you agree with these? Do you have stories of how they've been confused?

7. How might you re-write this session? What would you add or change?

Session 2

Institutional Politics:
Representative Government

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Politics stinks.

That sums up the feelings of about 1000 young people in Minnesota, who participated recently in forums on politics, held by Project Public Life. Their statements echo the feelings of many Americans right now. "As America's democratic visions and values seem to triumph around the world," a *New York Times* article explained, "an unhappy consensus has emerged at home that domestic politics has become so shallow, mean and meaningless that it is failing to produce the ideas and leadership needed to guide the United States in a rapidly changing world."

While most citizens show disdain for this kind of politics, it is our government: the structure defining our public policies and attempting to solve or address our public problems. For many, it is also the position of power that needs to be influenced to solve a problem they as citizens want solved. For others, it's the source of policies they strongly disagree with, and the target of their protests.

"It was a means to an end," explains Sandra Harp, member of the Minneapolis Board of Education. "I detest the term 'politics,' for what it usually means: graft, corruption, manipulation." But Ms. Harp "wanted to get things done," even as a student. She got involved in groups like the PTA, city-wide boards, and finally national organizations and policy committees.

"But I realized the final decisions were not made by any of these groups. I wanted to be in a place to make changes happen." So, she ran for school board. "The school board is a political decision-making body. That's where decisions are made."

"It's fun, and there are lots of puzzles to be solved," Paul Light, who has been involved in public policy aspects at the federal level and now is Associate Dean at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, explained. "I got involved in issues that I felt strongly about. Just the fact that I was there, on Capitol Hill, made a difference. By being involved, I affected the outcomes by a small margin."

"I got involved in issues that I felt strongly about. Just the fact that I was there, on Capitol Hill, made a difference."

What Works

Many people argue that institutional government has served the United States fairly well. Elected officials and government bureaus have built a system that can distribute resources and protect our national interests, with input from representatives of all 50 states. It has withstood the test of time, disagreement, and transfers of power to be the longest lasting republic in history.

As James Madison (fourth president of the United States and one of the authors of *The Federalist Papers*) stressed, representative government is essential for a vast and diverse nation. In a nation so large, it would be impossible for all of the citizens to gather in a town meeting. Representative government gives people room to participate while overcoming the problems of governing so large a nation.

> ***"Representative government gives people room to participate while overcoming the problems of governing so large a nation."***

The system, whatever its flaws, was carefully designed to ensure many centers of power that both compete and work together. Checks and balances were created to control the amount of power and specific duties of each branch, including responsibilities and connections to the public at large.

This system of government even provides for citizen involvement on a variety of levels. Local and state government have literally tens of thousands of citizen boards, elected positions and other opportunities to get involved. We have a constitutional guarantee of certain rights as citizens—of petition, of assembly, of free speech, for example—that protect our right to participate.

Also, our system of elections theoretically allows for regular practice of accountability. If your elected representatives don't do what you want, you can vote them out of office.

The system has a lot to offer. It seemed appropriate at the time of its creation. And in some respects it still is: we still need systems of representation, and ways to provide services and carry out public policies.

What Doesn't Work

But, as the sentiments above express, it's not working very well right now. It never was perfect. Graft and corruption, the prominence of elites versus "common" people in political roles, inequalities and red tape: these existed from the beginning. Yet these things have gotten worse, in large part because these institutions have lost their public nature. They are not very responsive to the needs and desires of the people they serve. Our government, from public schools to legislative bodies, no longer seems to be part of the commonwealth, something we the people own, participate in, and shape with our collective values. In fact, they often seem far removed from our daily lives. And, the politics of institutional government is not effectively solving our public problems, from drugs and poverty to providing good education and defining our national security interests.

Different people have different gripes about the government we have today and how its players do politics. There are several things, though, that we can point to as major weaknesses in our government system today: the professionalization of elected government and its services; a focus on the expert; and lack of citizen involvement.

It seems to many that you have to be a professional politician to participate. More so on the national or state level, but even to run for office on the local level in some places. To some extent, this is a function of the size of the population or place represented. But generally, to run for office, you need to be known well and be accepted by the party politicians, before the people get a say. It also has to do with the way we define who might be an appropriate candidate: what skills and experience are necessary, and who has those. It's difficult to live up to those standards without making politics your job. Finally, elections themselves have become characterized by big money and fancy campaigns, often out of reach of the person who might meet public standards but doesn't have the necessary resources built up. Because of this, candidates are far removed from citizens' perspectives, needs or values.

"It's the finest Congress money can buy. Too bad the American dollar doesn't go very far these days."

In addition, many politicians and bureaucrats do not see members of the public as *citizens*, with a role in the process of decision-making. Instead they see the public as clients or consumers. For example, an appointed committee of local government officials and leaders of the business community working on a controversial

public problem participated in a forum like the one teenagers participated in, discussed earlier. Only they had the image reversed: to them the public, not politicians, had neither the capacity to grasp the complexity of public issues, nor the skills to act effectively. "How could they ever adequately address public problems?," they wondered.

"

Paperwork and red tape are stacked so high that to get public assistance, people have to be olympic pole vaulters to get over.

–Director, Illionois Department of Public Aid

"

Politicians and government bureaucrats are not alone in this. Our society in general has come to value the expert over the amateur. While this can cause problems in other arenas, it's an especially serious problem in politics. In politics, it means that citizens are not seen as having anything to offer to public problem-solving. For example, a group of citizens who belong to community organizations affiliated with the Industrial Areas Foundation travelled to Washington, DC, to participate in a congressional hearing. "As they moved along this line there was a guard at the door to check people as they would go in," recounted Gerald Taylor, organizer. "The guard asked them 'Who are you?' And they said, 'Well, we're citizens.' The guard stopped and said to the others in line, 'Hey! Citizens!' They started laughing and joking because everybody else on line was a lobbyist or professional. It was a big joke that anybody who was not 'an insider' would go to a hearing."

As a result most people feel, and usually are, out of touch and unable to influence decisions on any level of government. Ms. Jane Doe from Cleveland can write 2000 letters to Mrs. Congresswoman on foreign policy, but professional lobbyists seem to have more effect on the outcome. Mr. Clerk at a local Housing and Urban Development office may have a better understanding of the needs of citizens using HUD services, but he has little impact in deciding procedures and practices for HUD.

This in part grows out of our conception of power. We tend to see power as limited: only a few can have it; if someone else has it, then I do not. For most of us, that limited power resides at the top of the hierarchy. We do not often set up structures that allow for collaborative decision-making, with participation from people on many levels of the problem. Our government is a good example of this. Reliance on and belief in "experts" only feeds that conception of power.

This narrow definition of who can participate contributes to the inefficiencies of government in terms of both process and problem-solving. The diverse groups involved in and affected by a particular public problem are not brought into the process of defining and finding solutions for that problem, whether its processing welfare forms or housing the homeless. When an issue is being addressed by elected officials, for example, special interests

battling each other through the representative dominate the process. It's not a process that convenes all perspectives to discuss and debate the issue and reach a judgment publicly and collaboratively. *Yet, often, only with participation from all parties—experts and non-experts—involved can adequate and effective decisions be made.* As Paul Light explained, it's not that all special interests are bad; "the problem is that their power is disproportionate to the average citizen."

Finally, normal acts of citizenship–limited to voting for most people today–don't develop much political knowledge or skill. Even supporters of a more elite government at the founding of our system worried about that. "A popular government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps both," wrote James Madison. While the media bombards us with opinions and pieces of news, we have few ways to really learn about and understand policies and their contexts that are key to making good judgments as citizens.

Political Dinosaur
SMALL BRAIN
SURVIVAL INSTINCT ONLY
SPECIAL INTEREST TAIL
PERFECT FOR ATTACHING PARASITIC "RIDERS". IF LOST OR MISPLACED, POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY TAXPAYERS
TINY FOREARMS
USELESS FOR GRAPPLING WITH ISSUES. CAN SIGN SMALL LIGHTWEIGHT BILLS AND SLING MUD.
POWERFUL LEGS
EXCELLENT FOR RUNNING FOR OFFICE OR FLEEING AN OUTRAGED CONSTITUENCY
2ND BRAIN
WRITES SPEECHES, CONTROLS LEGS, TAIL AND HINDSIGHT

23

"

A popular government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a farce or a tragedy; or, perhaps both.

–James Madison

"

Traditionally, institutional politics encompassed activities in addition to voting, including public gatherings, discussions of important issues of the day, and strong participation in decision-making by citizens. Town meetings and school boards follow this tradition. The League of Women Voters and student government in schools continue this tradition. Historically, they have provided arenas in which people learned and practiced public skills. But, they have lost much of their vitality and influence today, and many people see no reason for participating.

The citizenry has a great wealth of creativity and talent that could–and perhaps must–be tapped to solve the huge public problems our society faces, not to mention the small-scale ones in our neighborhoods. A re-focus on developing our capacity as citizens and creating ways for us to participate in public problem-solving would "put public back into public work."

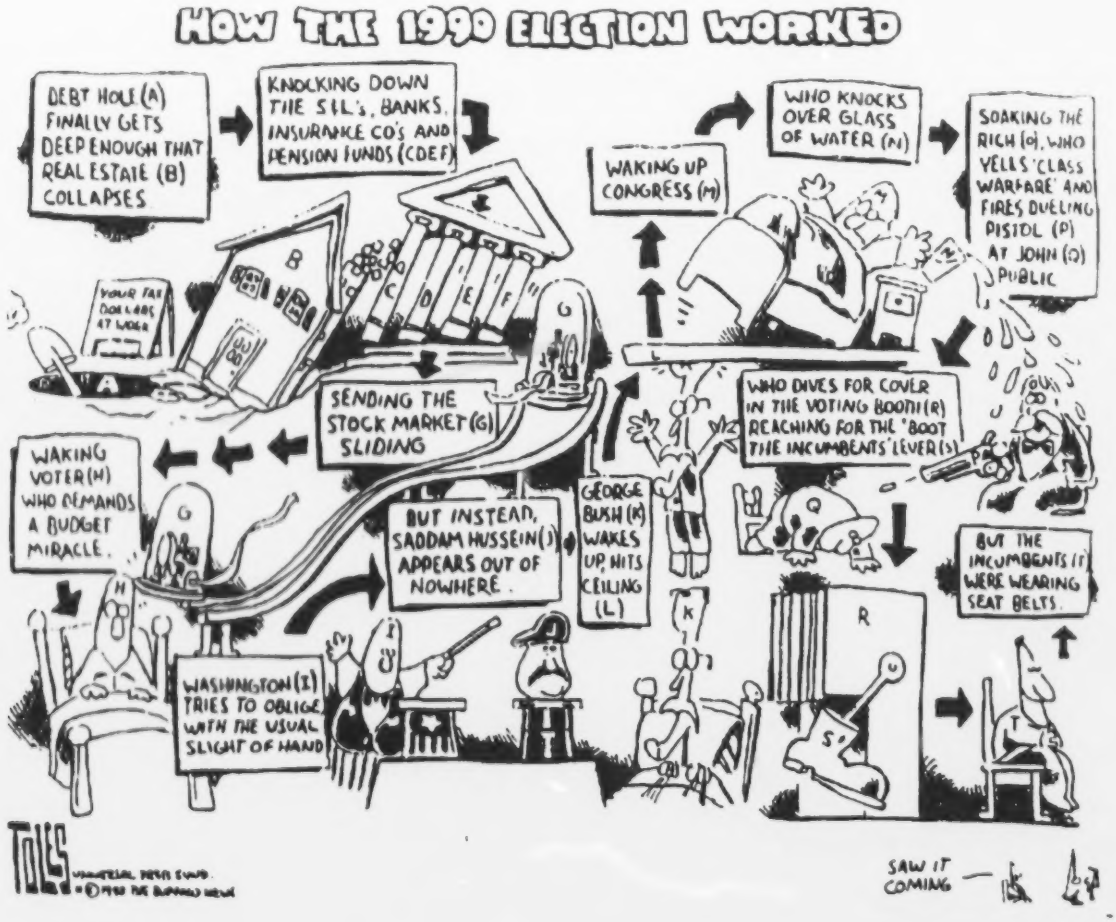
How can government reengage citizens in an honest and deliberative decision making process when problems are large and complex and "the public" is fragmented around diverse interests? Revitalizing government and making its public work more effective–more public–will take a lot of work. It is intimately linked with all the other forms of politics we talk about in this book. But, it can help set a tone for how we do politics, just by trying new things.

A task force of the Metropolitan Council (a planning board for the Twin Cities), assigned the task of siting a new airport in the metro area, did just that. Since September 1989, the Task Force had brought together a wide spectrum of interests directly concerned with the siting: airlines, business, public officials, environmentalists, representatives of civic groups. This last year, the Task Force invited Project Public Life to help members think through an alternative to the conventional public hearing process.

The Task Force experimented with a novel approach. To allow for more ownership by citizens in whose communities the airport might be built, public meetings included extended time for small group discussions that allowed a variety of perspectives to sufacefor debate. To continue this kind of public process, local communities also selected a mix of representatives–called community contacts–to continue to participate in a two way dialogue with the Task Force. Community contacts range from farmers and 4-H volunteers to local business people, teachers, and other professionals; they turned out to be broadly representative of the local areas.

Three meetings were held in each area. All were open to the public, but the final one was a general public meeting. (The others were meetings between local officials and the committee that the public could attend.)

Not everybody understood or liked the process. Some citizens, by the third meeting, were accusing the Task Force of trying to "divide and conquer" the citizen groups by holding the small group discussions. Some of the public officials didn't like giving so much of a role to the citizenry. Change is never easy! But, many appreciated the new process. While this experiment didn't go perfectly, it was a solid attempt at bringing the public back into this political, problem-solving process.


HOW THE 1990 ELECTION WORKED
DEBT HOLE (A) FINALLY GETS DEEP ENOUGH THAT REAL ESTATE (B) COLLAPSES
KNOCKING DOWN THE S&L's, BANKS, INSURANCE CO's AND PENSION FUNDS (CDEF)
WAKING UP CONGRESS (M)
WHO KNOCKS OVER GLASS OF WATER (N)
SOAKING THE RICH (O), WHO YELLS 'CLASS WARFARE' AND FIRES DUELING PISTOL (P) AT JOHN (Q) PUBLIC
SENDING THE STOCK MARKET (G) SLIDING
WHO DIVES FOR COVER IN THE VOTING BOOTH (R) REACHING FOR THE 'BOOT THE INCUMBENTS' LEVER (S)
WAKING VOTER (H) WHO DEMANDS A BUDGET MIRACLE.
BUT INSTEAD, SADDAM HUSSEIN (J) APPEARS OUT OF NOWHERE.
GEORGE BUSH (K) WAKES UP, HITS CEILING (L)
BUT THE INCUMBENTS IF WERE WEARING SEAT BELTS.
WASHINGTON (I) TRIES TO OBLIGE WITH THE USUAL SLIGHT OF HAND
TOLES
SAW IT COMING

TOLES © Buffalo News. Reprinted with permission of Universal Press Syndicate. All rights reserved.

25

Session 2: Questions for Discussion

1. What has been your experience with institutional government? What was effective? What wasn't?

2. *We the people are not free. Our democracy is but a name. We vote? What does that mean? It means we choose between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. We elect expensive masters to do our work for us, then blame them because they work for themselves and their class.*

   – Helen Keller, 1911

   a. Discuss this quote. What does it say about institutional government?

   b. What should the role of citizens be in electoral politics?

3. What else might the Metropolitan Council have changed to bring the public into this political discussion?

4. How might you re-write this session? What would you add or change?

26

Session 3

Protest Politics:
Citizens on the March

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

27

You see them on the nightly news, or pass by them at the federal building. They're holding signs, chanting, making speeches, demanding a change. "I don't remember the name of the organization that was rallying that day," a columnist said, "but they were a scruffy-looking bunch, and they seemed to be in unanimous agreement that anyone who had more than five dollars on his person was in league with the devil."

In recent years, millions of Americans have demanded changes on all sorts of issues, from Central American policy and environmental degradation to policies on AIDS research. Teenagers march to "just say no." Housewives advocate for safer products. Small businesses protest higher taxes. Farmers fight the loss of their land. Senior citizens lobby for social security.

The United States has a long history of citizen protest when government or society fails to act on pressing needs, or acts in ways some people consider wrong or unfair. Many groups have used protest as a tactic in a larger strategy for creating change. An insurgent public, for example (described in session one), can effectively use protest along with educational and service-oriented projects to push for change. People use protest to express their passion for justice and fairness: everyone from the Ku Klux Klan and the National Organization of Women (NOW) to Earth First! and the Moral Majority.

What Works

Protest politics is built on the notion that enough pressure can make unresponsive people or institutions act. As Frederick Douglass explained, "power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will." Protest mobilizes "people power" to make that demand. Used well, it even attracts more protestors, and moves participants to act in other ways.

Protest became a dominant way of doing politics in the 1960s. Many people then believed that protest could effectively produce change. In some cases it did, especially when it was coupled with education. Today, many protest out of hopelessness. "I joined the protestors against [the Gulf War] at the federal building because I just had to do something," one woman explained. Some have tried "proper" channels to get their demands met, to no avail. Protest can be an appealing alternative to the red-tape of elected government or the institutional bureaucracy, especially today. It is also a way for citizens who have little actual influence on institutions to let their representatives know how they feel about policy decisions.

> ***"The commercial media today say to the young in America who are critically concerned, we will cover you only if you break the law, if you take over buildings, if you smash windows– then you will get on network news. But, if you do research, if you have news conferences, if you lobby, if you litigate, it's not exciting enough. That's really quite a message."***
>
> ***– Ralph Nader, 1990***

For many, protest is a way to make a personal statement: "This is what I believe." It's often compelling, or enraging, and can range from simply being seen at a protest, to burning a flag or a book. Sometimes this is effective in making change, and sometimes change isn't the point.

"

Protest by itself can never get at the complexity of many of these issues.

"

Protest in general gives citizens a sense of power—of the ability to act publicly on issues that concern them. Participants feel the power of the collective voice in the camaraderie of protestors and the visible demonstration of their anger and frustration.

Few people would argue that protest is *never* justified. But many these days raise questions about what exactly protest politics accomplishes.

What doesn't work

As mentioned in session two, we have lost a lot of public skills and the arenas in which to use them. And, many citizens feel—and are—excluded from public decision-making processes. The attitude and process of today's protest adds to and comes out of that loss.

The attitude of many people who protest today is often narrower. Rather than "struggling for power and reform with the assumption of responsibility for public affairs" (session one), they protest to demand their rights, to demand that actions they consider morally wrong are stopped, to demand that *somebody else* do something.

They often use a moralized or strongly ideological debate that includes a narrow range of beliefs and harshly judge all those excluded. If you support choice, you are a baby killer; if you oppose affirmative action, you are a racist or a sexist. This kind of protest makes politics just as exclusive as institutional politics, because it excludes the people in the middle, not to mention those on the other side.

Protest by itself can never get at the complexity of many of these issues. Signs and bumper stickers can only hold so many words. And the moralized rhetoric and tone to many protests makes it difficult to discuss and debate publicly the issues without attacking the other personally. So whatever the issue or ideological position, protest produces personal *opinions*. But it almost never produces the informed *judgment* that comes from publicly arguing through questions, and developing a broader perspective.

Protest, used this way, ends up dividing the public: one wins and one loses, one perspective is right or valid and the other isn't. So there's no chance to create together the world *both sides have to*

live in—together. This is a problem, because we can't simply exile all we may consider to be racists or abortionists. We need a politics that brings us together to discuss, debate and argue out what our world should be like—including how we want to approach these issues—and teaches us ways to carry that out.

When an organization or group focuses mainly on protest they often are ineffective, both in terms of building an organization and winning issues.

Protest on its own makes it difficult to sustain action and to bring in new people. Coming out to protest every week might be exciting at first. But if there is no movement or change, it becomes boring and seems futile, and people leave. The leadership gets frustrated or burns out. Furthermore, protest narrowly defines who can participate as only those who are comfortable with protest, or who agree with the slogan in use.

Protest develops public skills: public speaking, in particular, and at best practice with debate and persuasion. But it does not educate people for action beyond protest. The often highly-charged rhetoric and politically-correct culture adds to this problem.

This narrow capacity makes working with other people difficult. If all an organization does is come together to plan and carry out protests that are highly judgmental, consequences include:

- inability to work with other organizations who could be allies on this issue but don't meet our political standards;
- inability to work with or even approach the target, to negotiate out a solution or participate in carrying out that solution;
- inability to sustain action because people don't feel it leads to results.

Protest used this way may give people a *sense* of power, but it doesn't really give them any power to *influence* the decision-makers. It also does not prepare people to move from protest to governance: to the day to day maintenance and decision-making necessary for running our neighborhoods, our cities, our states, our nation.

Learning governance requires a process that includes a diversity of perspectives and actions, promotes discussion and debate, and teaches skills for citizenship broadly. Such a process can be very effective, as many community organizations can testify. It brings a wide range of people together to envision and create their world. And, by participating in it, ordinary people can see the possibility of being actors and creators, not just complainers.

"

As on young SDS activist put it recently, after a certain amount of frustration, you decide that at least you could make yourself into a brick and hurl yourself.

–Staughton Lynd, 1969

"

Session 3: Questions for Discussion

1. What are your experiences with protest politics? Have you ever been part of a deomonstration? Where were you in the protest: organizer, participant, in the back, observer? How did you feel about the protest; about your role in it? What did you think of the protest? What did it achieve? What did it not achieve?

2. The role the media plays in politics dramatically influences how politics works. What is the role of the media in protest politics? What role **should** the media play?

3. Discuss the protest politics and time: can protest achieve short and long term goals? Does it matter?

4. How might you re-write this session? What would you add or change?

Reprinted by permission: Tribune Media Services.

Session 4

Service Politics:
Helping One Another

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Literacy volunteers. Food servers at homeless shelters. Muscular Dystrophy walk-a-thon participants. Envelope stuffers for the community organization. Low-income home builders. Service.

It's meaning, and the activities associated with the word, have changed over time. Service conjures up an image of the kinds of regular activities people did to care for each other and the community, to deal with small scale problems or pieces of larger ones: those problem-solving activities outside of formal government, including raising the neighbor's barn, cleaning up the alley, providing food and shelter, teaching someone to read. This is the problem-solving public deTocqueville marvelled at in the 1800s. It also encompasses one's service to the country or community as a whole, in formal governmental offices or the military. They were—and are—personal acts of a public nature.

Since the mid-1980s, many people have trumpeted community service as an antidote to the "Me Generation" mentality of the Reagan years. Community service is, they say, a way for individuals to publicly act on issues that concern them. As one report put it: "If the service commitment begins early enough and continues into adulthood, this participatory citizenship would become a tradition of local political participation that sustains a person, a community, and a nation."

Service today encompasses a broad range of things. Generally, it is the giving of our time, talents, or resources to assist another person or persons. Conceptions of service vary. Some people see service as "charity", something you do for some unfortunate person because you have more than they do. Others see service as a way to empower themselves and to provide an environment that allows others to help themselves. "Some people come in totally unaware of issues—they pity the homeless or think it's a popular thing to do," explained Susan Kundel, a social service agency employee. "Others are committed to social justice issues. And some just have a genuine compassion for other human beings."

The nature of service today is unique. Nowadays, it is not usually something you go do with and for your neighbor. You go to someone else's neighborhood. You don't know the people you are served by or are serving. Many don't expect to get something back; rather, they feel good about contributing and gaining some skills. Many do service out of a real passion for helping out, yet some are assigned community service as a punishment.

Service today has a much less tangible gain, though important in developing a commitment to public work. It's often hard for

"Generosity of spirit is thus the ability to acknowledge an interconectedness–one's debts to society–that binds one to others whether one wants to accept it or not. It is also the ability to engage in the caring that nurtures that interconnectedness. It is a virtue that everyone should strive for; a conception of citizenship that is still alive in America."

-Robert Bellah

people to see service as part of public participation, linked though distinct from government. Service once was seen as part of *governance*: what we do informally, from public discussion to service projects, that supports the formal functions of government. Service acts were seen in many cases as *reciprocal* acts: people understood that they gave and got back, for the good of the individual and the whole. These larger implications of service are not as clear today.

The growth of the welfare state and the rise of professionalized service agents (in medicine, teaching, social services, for example) undercut many informal or community-based service activities. Many people believed they could solve the social problems we faced on this large-scale. However, some of the same problems we talked about in institutional politics appeared and spread. As with institutional politics, the relationship between "server" and "served" became more one of "fixing" than one of "problem-solving". Generally, citizens are seen as clients. It is assumed that people do not have the capacity to participate in problem-solving; the expert, be it the volunteer or the professional, has the answer.

And we in turn have come to see government and other large institutions as the provider—doing things for us, taking on the social obligations we at one time shared. Power is seen as very limited and flowing from the top down. The process often involves categorizing or labelling of clients, and usually is rigid. While some services, like battered women shelters, aim more to empower the client and change the system, "most social service agencies and government assistance programs have lost their ability to get clients to be agents of change," Susan Kundel explained.

What works

Service organizations and opportunities still play an important role. They fill in the cracks where government services have not sufficed. Community-based and self-help social services in particular assist in sustaining and revitalizing individuals, families and communities. Volunteers learn a lot and gain from the experience. Service has great undeveloped potential for creating an informed and active citizenry.

Community service connects people in ways that other forms of politics don't often do. Connection replaces suspicion and ignorance. "I love to hear people's stories," one VISTA volunteer explained. Another VISTA volunteer told how her work opened up a whole new world for her. The experiences and situations of people in different neighborhoods can be eye-opening. People have opportunities through service to do something that actually makes a difference in another's life.

> ***"Community service connects people in ways that other forms of politics don't often do."***

Service experiences create a sense of usefulness and real-world connection. A family volunteers regularly to serve dinner at a homeless shelter as a way to give something back to the community together. A national philanthropic foundation staff decides to spend time in a Big Brother/Big Sister program as an alternative to the time they had been spending on recreation, in part to be better connected to the world they fund. One high school student from southern Minnesota who served as an Emergency Medical Technician in her town's ambulance service explained that "in school, you study math and chemistry and take the test and forget it. Here you have to remember what you've learned because somebody's life depends on it." Out of these sentiments, many believe, can come a different sort of human experience—where people learn to care about and work with each other.

The skills and values learned from service work are important in doing public work. But in order to reconnect service and politics, we need to reconsider what service is about and how it is done.

What doesn't work

While service deals with political issues and problems, it rarely makes that explicit. Instead, service organizations stress personal development and self-esteem. "Come volunteer because it feels good," they seem to say. Many—especially college students—see service as an *alternative* to politics, outside of the unappealing realm we talked about in session two, and different from the political action of protest that is now so common on campuses.

One consequence of this is that most service programs include little learning or discussion about the policy dimensions of the "issues" (poverty, homelessness, drug use, illiteracy) that people wrestle with through person-to-person effort. Volunteers rarely have ways to reflect upon the dynamics of power, race and class that are created when middle class and upper class people "serve" in lower socioeconomic neighborhoods. Some people call this the "band-aid" aspect of service. They argue that until people connect service to other kinds of political action and to the larger policy issues, it will just be a band-aid over the problem, not a real treatment or solution to it.

Another consequence of service's removal from politics is a privatized language—one that focuses on personal growth and private experience—rather than a public language. This language of caring and sharing coupled with a focus on one-on-one activities has some serious repercussions. It individualizes participants, so that collective action is not often talked about or even considered. Politics and power are separated from the "nice" world of service through this language, although they are very strongly connected to it.

"

Another consequence of service's removal from politics is a privatized language—one that focuses on personal growth and private experience—rather than a public language.

"

Describing service as a purely altruistic activity hides the socio-political impact of service, for example. Service language assumes sameness—"we all have the same feelings under the skin, after all"—and the language of charity often implies a relationship based more on pity than on helpfulness. This language makes very difficult any discussion or clarity about racial, ethnic, economic or religious differences.

We can reconnect service and politics. In fact, people like doing it. A group of junior high students at St. Bernard School in St. Paul would agree. Through Public Achievement, a project of Project Public Life, these youth first tackled planning school-wide Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events. Now they are developing a project to work as mentors to children in the school's child care program. They see it as a way to help build their parish and to work with the younger children.

Public Achievement makes explicit the connection between service-based civic education and politics. Coaches push the teams of teenagers to pay attention to questions of public, power and diversity, among other things. In the process the teens develop skills for public life, from strategic planning and evaluation to negotiation and running meetings.

The St. Bernard team has learned from and enjoyed the process—and so have their teachers. "I have developed a new appreciation and respect for my students as I watched them identify issues, devise strategies to deal with those issues, and evaluate their own progress," said teacher Jeff Maurer.

Public Achievement is one way to begin to reconceptualize the role of service in politics, as an important aspect of citizenship.

"You Talk a lot about the need for popcorn, but I don't see you doing anything about it."

Drawing by Maslin, © 1988 *The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Session 4: Questions for Discussion

1. Discuss your experience with community service? What types of programs have you been part of? What was your role? What worked? What didn't?

2. Examine the role that privatized language plays in this type of politics. How does the language of personal growth and private experience affect the outcome of service actions?

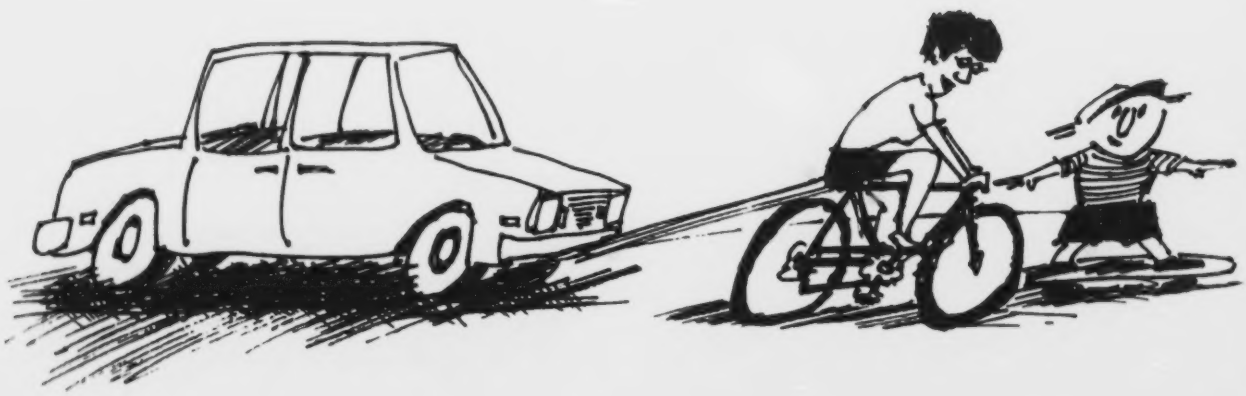
3. How might service become a more **public** action?

4. Discuss the quote from Robert Bellah (page 35). Is "generosity of spirit" connected to your notion of citizenship?

5. How might you re-write this session? What would you add or change?

Session 5

Community Politics:
Neighborhood Self-Help



In the 1970s and 1980s, many neighborhoods in America from Manhattan's Lower East Side to the barrios of East Los Angeles and the ethnic neighborhoods of Chicago struggled to rebuild themselves. These changes reflected new community approaches to social services and problem-solving. Several thousand block clubs formed in New York City alone from 1975 to 1978, working on a range of things from health care services to urban gardens. Today there are an estimated 7000 significant-sized community organizations around the nation. In communities once considered "garbage dumps" by city officials, redlined by banks, and starved of traditional services, stirrings of a renewed spirit became visible. In rural communities hit by drought and a changing farm economy, citizens found innovative ways to redevelop their towns.

In many ways, these communities were rediscovering the American tradition of community self-help and control. In the 1770s in Concord, as the commonwealth's representatives prepared to vote on what to do about the British, the town discussed and debated the issue, came to a decision, and instructed their elected representative to vote for revolution; that representative knew he would be held accountable for his vote. In the same way, community organizations today try to hold elected representatives and other officials accountable for their actions and their connection to the public. In small towns and cities in the "new world," people knew they needed each other to effectively build and defend their community, and they worked together to address problems and create a vision for their community, as we discussed in session four. Today's community groups, while different, seek to do just that.

Communities get the brunt of the problems we have talked about in other sessions: other people making decisions about how their neighborhood ought to look or who should do business there; large-scale corporations or bureaucracies often dominate the scene that used to belong to the man down the street or the local women's group; community members are seen as parochial, interested in only their own individual welfare, and without the skills or knowledge to know how to solve problems or envision a good place to live.

What works

Community-based problem-solving combines aspects of each kind of politics we have talked about to counter those forces. While paying attention to and working with local officials, community members come together to decide on their **own** what problems need to be dealt with and how; they come up with strategies for solving particular problems, and for building the community they have envisioned using service, institutional politics and protest.

> ***"The iron rule: Never do for people what they can do for themselves."***
>
> ***–Industrial Areas Foundation***

Such groups give citizens a role in public life, an arena usually overtaken by professionals. Actually, citizens are often the best judges of "what works" for their community. Experts and officials tend to act with condescension, on the one hand, and rarely grasp all the aspects of the problem, on the other. Through community action, people take back control over their lives from professionals and distant bureaucrats and decision makers. "Either you plan or they plan for you," said Bertha Gilkey, a long-time community activist in St. Louis. Community-based problem-solving assumes citizens have or can develop capacities and skills to effectively govern their community.

"

I, for one, believe that if you give people a thorough understanding of what it is that confronts them, and the basic causes that produce it, they'll create their own program; and when the people create a program, you get action. When their 'leaders' create programs, you get no action.

-Malcolm X

"

The process of community action also allows people to develop those public capacities. Gilkey explained the attitude of the experts: "Poor people aren't supposed to manage. Poor people are to *be* managed." Community members often believe they are powerless. "What we've done is cut through all the baloney and say it doesn't take all that," she said. "People with degrees and credentials got us in this mess. All it takes is some basic skills to get us out." Those skills include everything from painting to fundraising. Community organizations have found ways to call on and cultivate the natural talent of their members.

While such organizations play a very important role in local community life, they have limitations.

What doesn't work

Communities involve complicated relationships. Sometimes community groups organize to get something into their neighborhood; sometimes, it's to keep something or someone out. We have seen over the last decade the rise of the NIMBY syndrome: Not In My Back Yard. The NIMBY problem stems in part from a failure of government to work with local citizens in siting a prison or dump. But community life can be parochial, narrow or resistant to change. For example, some community groups organize to ban particular material from their child's school books, or to keep people of color out of their neighborhood.

Community groups, no matter what they organize for or against, believe their work is for the best of the community. Often, though, community organizations represent only a section of the community. For example, a community development organization in a town in Iowa is largely dominated by the upper-middle class population; the Southwest Side of Chicago has several community organizations claiming to speak for the whole community, but

presenting very different visions of the community and ways of reaching those visions. Because of this, in many instances they cannot effectively address problems because they do not have all of the community's interests represented.

The flip-side of this is finding community members to do this kind of public work. In this day, few of us have the time to organize our block or negotiate with our mayor. Or just to go to meetings to talk about what to do! Many people get involved around specific, short-term issues, and often leave once that issue is resolved. Without changing the way we organize our time, or shortening our work week, this is often an insurmountable problem. Others spend much more time on national or international issue-organizing than on local issues. Not everyone sees the local arena as a priority.

Another problem many community organizations are beginning to address is that themethods developed earlier this century (1950-1970) often no longer work. Saul Alinsky, the dean of community organizing, used popular protests and other dramatic, confrontational actions to push the power-holder to move. They often worked. Sometimes they still do. A reliance on protest and fighting against things, however, forces communities into the same problem protestors face. "There's a tendency for people to enjoy the initiation part, the ideas part, the rallying against part of organizing," explained Gerald Taylor. "But when it comes to the powers that be [like mayors] saying, 'Okay, you all take over the city, I'm leaving! You are 100% correct.' Then we fall back into the debate, how are we going to make it work?"

"We don't bother buying pesticides anymore. We just spray the crops with our groundwater."

More and more, communities have needed to take on governing and service aspects of community life in order to effectively solve the problems they face, not just push others to redirect resources to their neighborhood.

"

Citizens need ways to link themselves and their communities to the larger public world for people to effectively govern their community and participate in large-scale public decision-making.

"

Community organizations often have a small-scale view of theworld. They often leave unaddressed the larger dangers and forces which shape communities from the outside: plant relocations, toxic wastes, large developers, the power of television and advertising. Community politics can effectively address local problems. But that local, narrow interest can prohibit or hinder solving large social problems. Citizens need ways to link themselves and their communities to the larger public world for people to effectively govern their community *and* participate in large-scale public decision-making. Some communities have been forced to do this, because they had to take on basic social services like health care, child care, or housing programs.

This connection—local level to national level—is especially important today. First, in this world of the multi-national corporation and government bureaucracy, communities need to see and look for the link between problems in their communities and large-scale trends or problems.

For example, the Southwest Community Congress (SCC) in Chicago wanted to address problems around housing in their community; white flight and dishonest real estate practices combined to devastate their community. They didn't just work on these issues within the community. They looked at other forces causing or contributing to the problem. One problem they found was a lack of understanding on the part of house purchasers, and a loan process that did not make clear the responsibilities and burdens of home ownership. FHA loans in particular were prone to this problem. So, combining attempts to work with the federal government, protests to push them to move, and a lawsuit, in 1977 SCC finally won a pre-purchase counseling program that every person applying for an FHA loan goes through.

By the late 1980s the program was not being run well and was on the verge of being slashed. But the members of SCC knew if the effort was made, the program would have a good effect on their neighborhood. They worked with and pushed the government some more, and now run the program themselves in a housing center that combines information on homeownership with classes and programs for home upkeep, and block club organizing. A combination of local and national level solutions has been effective in ways that a focus on simply local aspects of the problem would not have been.

Secondly, as a society we need the participation of local communities to adequately solve the pressing problems we face. From drug abuse to lack of housing to poor quality education, effective solutions will only come with participation from people at every level of the problem. The government or corporations cannot afford to ignore the local community.

Community-based problem-solving has a lot to offer as a model for effective politics: collaborative problem-solving that values citizen input, and analysis of problems that looks at local and national factors, for example. A politics adequate to the present challenge—a citizen-centered politics—develops and extends these aspects beyond community, to all the public arenas in which we live our lives.

Session 5: Questions for Discussion

1. What is your experience with community politics? What worked? What didn't? Would community politics work in your neighborhood? Why or why not?

2. Time. Everyone is busy and doesn't have enough of it. Discuss the role of time in community based problem-solving.

3. What does community mean to you? Is community different in large cities, in the suburbs and in small towns? How? Why?

4. Explore the relationship between community based problem-solving and the institutionalization of services. How does a community sustain its response to a given problem?

5. How does community politics relate to national politics?

6. How might you re-write this session? What would you add or change?

Session 6

Citizen Politics:
People Taking Charge

So what do we do now? How do we do politics better, and with more of us participating in it?

This session looks at some key concepts and skills of citizen politics. Citizen politics pulls people in as participants, and focuses on the process of political education necessary to develop the skills of public life. It also looks at how we can do politics more effectively with diversity and collaborative problem-solving practices.

Citizen politics can take place in any public arena—from your workplace to Congress to homeless shelters. It takes time and practice.

"Citizen politics can take place in any public arena—from your workplace to Congress to homeless shelters. It takes time and practice."

Public Language

On page sixteen, there's a diagram distinguishing public, community and private life. Public life has some unique qualities that create a bridge for people between their individual or community experience and the larger public world. Public language and public space are two key elements.

Public language allows people to remap politics, putting themselves back in as serious conversants and players and drawing on their own experiences and capacities, to envision cooperation around common projects. In the forums described in session two, while teenagers hated politics, they had pretty positive associations with the word, "public": they could see themselves included in that word. Through problem-solving opportunities like Public Achievement in which young people identify what matters to them and then develop ways to act on these issues, they recreate the political map to be a public map: one that includes them as effective participants.

Public language creates more room than private or communal language. This develops a practical space for recognition of variation in experience, value and belief in which there can still be a "we" that acts together. Differences are seen as helpful to the problem-solving process, not a problem in and of themselves. Thus the individual with all her talents and flaws gets to participate as a member of the public.

Public Space

Public space is open and accessible, involving a mix of different people and groups. Public space is a place in which people act on the connections between local settings (either geographic or institutional) and issues, and larger frameworks of policy-making, communication and influence.

In such settings, action involves political "arts" like developing political relationships, listening and speaking well, understanding power dynamics, negotiating, practicing judgment, holding participants accountable. These overlap with but also are distinguishable from the capacities developed in both private life and community. These political skills, not well taught today, are nonetheless indespensible for action in the world as it is.

"

Indeed, politics is animated by concerns forged out of people's everyday, personal experience.

"

Free Spaces

Free spaces are a special kind of public space. Based more within a community, free spaces are places to make connection between personal experience and the larger, public world. They are also places to develop public skills, and to evaluate public work. One example of free space is women's groups at the birth of the most recent women's movement, in which they could name their personal experiences and tie them to the larger social and political culture; coffee houses, taverns, beauty parlors and community organizations also play a similar role. In many cases, free spaces lead to public action. They are important, comfortable places for people to find out what they really care about and to learn how to act on that.

Relational Politics

Citizen politics is built on a relational, interactive quality of public life that highlights the need to cultivate ongoing public relationships among parties who have long-term overlapping interests or concerns in common. Relational politics generates respect for diversity, the ability to deal with conflict, and the skills of negotiation, compromise, bargaining, holding others and oneself accountable, and learning to understand other views. It means that we may not like the people we need to work with in problem-solving, but we understand the need to work with others. The person who an organization fought against yesterday may be one's best ally tomorrow.

Self-Interest

Private interests are not something we need to put aside as we enter the public arena. Indeed, politics is animated by concerns forged out of people's everyday, personal experience. But interests have gotten a bad rap. People see interests as something to cover up and hide in order to do work "for the public good." Or as something only greedy and selfish people have.

But self-interests are not selfish or merely private. In fact, the word "interests" comes from the Latin phrase meaning "to be among." Your self-interest describes what you care about, where your passion is, your vision for the community or nation. It moti-

vates you to act in the public world, and comes along with your particular perspectives and ways of doing things. Citizen politics is built by each person working for their self-interests: what they are strongly motivated by.

Learning and telling your own story is a powerful way to under stand what motivates you and what's most important to you. You enter public life based on what you care about—and learning your own story is a way to find out what you care about most.

Other people do the same. Interviewing is a useful skill in understanding where they are coming from. By understanding others' self-interests, you can discover who they are, why they do what they do, and why they might want to work with you. This is very helpful both in building an organization, and in doing other public work. It's part of building relationships with the people you need to work with in order to accomplish what you have set out to do. So if you are working on educational issues, you might want to set up a meeting with local school board members just to find out who they are, without making demands on them or coming with your own agenda. Find out why they do work with schools, and you may find a way to hook them into your own self-interests.

> ***"Public Life is most of all a place of difference"***

Diversity, Power and Problem-Solving

Public life is most of all a place of difference. In private life, we associate with people who share similar outlooks and values. In public life, we meet people from backgrounds unlike our own. We must presume dissimilarity in public, rather than assume that "we're all the same."

This is part of making that room we mentioned above, that allows for the many different perspectives, self-interests and talents that citizens have—whether they are experts, elected officials or the supermarket checker—to be used in public problem-solving.

Presuming diversity changes the way we do problem-solving. It means that other people have something important to offer to the process, so it requires a collaborative process. That means that you have some power to influence the definition and solution of the problem. It means that everybody is held accountable for their contribution.

Diversity is not just a nice thing to celebrate. It is a fact, first of all, that we are a highly diverse yet interdependent nation. Secondly, as we talked about throughout the sessions, diversity is key to finding effective and adequate solutions to problems on many levels. The small office works much better if everybody can participate in

office decisions. The services at HUD work more smoothly and effectively if the clerk participates in creating them. National social problems are much more effectively addressed if local communities are part of the problem solving. School reform is much more effective if the parents of students from all income levels and ethnicities participate.

To make diversity work, so to speak, we need to practice a different kind of power. As we have discussed, today power is seen as zero-sum (someone else has it and therefore I do not) and one-directional (held at the top of the hierarchy and practiced on those below). But, that's not the only kind of power there is. There is collaborative power, for example.

Practicing collaborative power means seeing power as relational. What I do affects someone else. The way I exercise power affects the way we can work together, and the outcomes of our work. If I simply hit you to get my way, I may be effective for the moment but I'd have to keep hitting you in order to keep getting my way. Collaborative decision-making processes work better if what you want to do is acknowledge and work with diversity, and find effective solutions to problems you face.

Political Development or Education for Public Life

Politics is like baseball or sewing or writing. It's something we might have good natural instincts about, but we need arenas in which to practice, and we need to learn the skills of it. Politics is a craft.

> ***"Politics is a craft."***

Thomas Jefferson and others understood this. Our public schools were created in part to provide a place for the general citizenry to learn the skills of public life, as well as our history and how to read. Today schools are more geared toward producing professionals and people who get the right answer. So we need to find other arenas to teach people, young and old.

A good way to do that is just to be attentive to the work you do, seeing it as a classroom for politics. Give people room to try new roles on, or just to participate. Watch for who has particularly good skills in some areas, and ask them to teach others. And most important, evaluate.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a great learning process. Through it, you and your group can figure out what you have accomplished in terms of your goal or mission, and the next steps to take. It is helpful both for the organization, and the individual members. Evaluation can take place after staff meetings, public actions, events, or intermittently to figure out if the group is heading in the right direction or following its mission.

Evaluation can be very simple, or very elaborate. You can evaluate both the event itself or individual roles. An easy framework includes the following:

Feelings: Especially after public events, feelings are good clues to the overall success, or failure, of the event. You don't need to analyze feelings at first. It takes a while to get comfortable saying your feelings honestly or without analysis. And sometimes it is not appropriate to be too honest.

What worked well?: Considering your goals, list what was achieved. What was helpful in the process of the meeting or event?

What did not work well?: What didn't go as planned? What was planned but didn't go well? What goals were not achieved? What could be done better?

What did we/l learn?: What lessons did you learn as an organization? As individuals? What skills did you learn, or get practice with?

It takes time

Being a citizen takes time. Collaborative problem solving takes even more time. But it's worth it! So take the time to build relationships with people you need to work with, and to find out what you really want out of the work you are doing. Practice judgment and deliberation. What *is* the problem? Who is involved? What solutions do they offer, and how do they see the problem? What can we agree on, and what can I give up? Think about that and talk to others. And have fun.

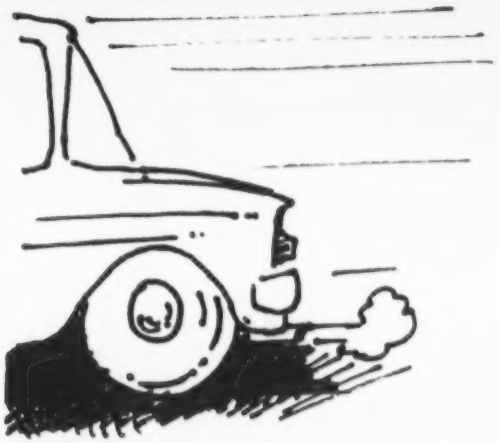
" Being a citizen takes time. Collaborative problem-solving takes even more time. But it's worth it! "

Session 6: Questions for Discussion

1. How might you infuse the concepts of citizen politics into your current community work?

2. Citizen politics doesn't happen unless you try it–so take action!

Appendices



A: How to use this book

dOing pOlitics may be used by any group of people interested in examining and strengthening the ways we do public work. Each session is followed by a series of discussion questions. Use your own experiences and those of your group to explore the themes in this book. The questions for disucussion are simply an outline for this type of analysis; use them as you see fit.

This book is set up for six study sessions, to be spread out over six weeks. Some suggestions (that came from a number of groups' experiences) for running each session are below.

- assign a convenor(s);
- rotate convenors each week;
- convenors might give a presentation based on some outside reading (use some of the resources suggested in appendix B, or your own);
- assign participants weekly tasks: for example, go out into town and interview someone involved in each type of political action;
- use the types of politics presented in this book to analyze particular issues—what does this create? how might it change your work?

dOing pOlitics is meant to be read, challenged, argued with; perhaps it will spur your group to further action. Get a group together. Tell us what happens. As citizens, we need to educate one another and learn from one another.

For further information on convening or participating in this type of discussion, contact:
Study Circles Resource Center
Route 169 • PO Box 203 • Pomfret, CT 06258
203/928-2616 • 203/928-3713 (fax).

The Study Circles Resource Center offers clearinghouse services for those in search of existing study circle course material, assistance with developing reading materials for a study circle, training material for organizers and leaders, and a newsletter.

B: Resources

Readings

What follows are a number of readings with themes relevant to the text of *dOing pOlitics*. This is not an exhaustive bibliography by any means, however, it is a place to start. Read some, and add your own resources to this list.

Traditions and Challenges

The Discourses
Niccolo Machiavelli.

Individualism and Commitment in American Life
Robert Bellah et al, editors.

Notes on the State of Virginia
Thomas Jefferson.

The Populist Moment
Lawrence Goodwin.

Race, Class, and Politics: Essays on American Colonial and Revolutionary Society
Gary Nash.

Rediscovering America's Values
Frances Moore Lappe'.

Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age
Benjamin Barber.

Vaclev Havel: Or, Living in Truth
Vaclev Havel.

Institutional Politics

Bureaucracy and Political Power
B.C. Smith.

The Consequences of Consent: Elections, Citizen Control and Popular Acquiescence
Benjamin Ginsberg.

The Federalist Papers
Alexander Hamilton et al.

Politics by Other Means: The Declining Importance of Elections in America
Benjamin Ginsberg and Martin Shefter.

Protest Politics

Free Space: The Sources of Democratic Change in America
Sara Evans and Harry Boyte

More Action for a Change: Students Serving the Public Interest
Kelley Grifin and Ralph Nader.

Organizing the Movement
Gary Delgado.

Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-63
Taylor Branch.

Personal Politics: The Roots of Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left
Sara Evans.

Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage
Todd Gitlin.

Why We Lost the ERA
Jane Mansbridge.

Service Politics

A Summons to Life
Robert Woodson.

After Virtue
Alasdair MacIntyre.

America's Voluntary Spirit
Brian O'Connell.

Disabling Professions
Ivan Illich et. al.

Habits of the Heart
Robert Bellah.

Haven in a Heartless World
Christopher Lasch.

Servant Leadership: A Journey Into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness
Robert Greenleaf.

Community Politics

To Empower People: The Role of Mediating Institutions in Social Policy
Peter Berger and John Richard Neuhaus.

Let the People Decide: Neighborhood Organizing in America
Robert Fisher.

Organizing for Social Change
Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall and Steve Max.

Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley
John Gaventa.

Reveille for Radicals
Saul Alinsky.

Citizen Politics

Coming of Age in Mississippi
Ann Moody.

Commonwealth: A Return to Citizen Politics
Harry Boyte.

The Human Condition
Hannah Arendt.

The Invisible Man
Ralph Ellison.

"Politics as Education," in *Social Policy, Spring 1990.*
Harry Boyte.

The Public and Its Problems
John Dewey.

Organizations and Networks

Below are a number of groups whose work might be of interest. It is a representative listing, and their work often spans the categories. Contact some of them, and add your own resources to the list.

Traditions and Challenges

Council for the Advancement of Citizenship
1200-18th Street N.W.
Suite 302
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/857-0580

Institute for Democracy in Education
University of Ohio
1241 McCracken Hall
Athens, OH 45701-2979

The National Civic League
1445 Market Street
Suite 300
Denver, CO 80202-1728
303/571-4343

National Issues Forum
100 Commons Road
Dayton, OH 45459-2777
800/433-7834
800/433-4819 (in Ohio)

People for the American Way
2000 M Street N.W.
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/467-4999

Institutional Politics

The Advocacy Institute
1730 Rhode Island Avenue N.W.
Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/659-8475

Common Cause
2030 M Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/833-1200

State Public Interest Research Group
local community boards,
school boards,
city councils...

Protest Politics

Citizen Action or COACT
c/o Midwest Academy
225 W. Ohio
Suite 250
Chicago, IL 60610
312/645-6018

Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC)
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Campus Y
Building #151A, CB #5115
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
919/962-2333

Service Politics

Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL)
386 McNeal Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, MN 55108
612/624-3018

Independent Sector
1828 L Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036
202/233-8100

United Way of America
(also, look for local affiliates)
701 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
703/836-7100

local YMCA/YWCA
local agencies

Others

Resources come in many shapes and sizes. Below are others we find useful.

Pump Up the Volume, 1990 movie.
Star Trek: The Next Generation.
The Utne Reader and other magazines
your experience
your local or state historical society
your local public library
your newspaper

Community Politics

Center for Community Change
1000 Wisconsin Avenue N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
202/342-0519

Council for Community-Based Development
1070 Thomas Jefferson Street N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
202/342-9262

Industrial Areas Foundation
36 New Hyde Park Road
Franklin Square, NY 11010
516/354-1076

Midwest Academy
225 W. Ohio
Suite 250
Chicago, IL 60610
312/645-6018

local community and neighborhood organizations

Citizen Politics

Institute for the Arts of Democracy
700 Larkspur Landing Circle
Suite 199
Larkspur, CA 94939
415/453-3333

Project Public Life
Humphrey Center
301-19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612/625-0142

Walt Whitman Center
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, NJ 08854
201/932-6685